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Evaluation of USSR Area Program.

I attended nearly of [] lectures, but was compelled to miss ^{about half} many of the later lectures by []

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This type of program can increase analyst effectiveness by making sure that all analysts in a certain field have a minimum common background for their more specialized work and are able to understand the ~~inner~~ applications of intelligence in their fields to other fields, and vice versa.

The content and method of the course was not ideal for our needs, but I recognize the difficulty of trying to plan a course specifically for one relatively small group, and one composed of people with as divergent backgrounds as ours.

The course was of value to me personally, but not sufficiently so to justify all the time spent. Ideally, such a course should provide a general background on the history, geography (particularly economic), economic organization and functioning, political theory and practice and, possibly, basic attitudes of the population of the country involved. What we got were three individual presentations by competent authorities, but uncorrelated -- not integrated ~~in~~ as a unified course. Possibly what I say the course should provide ideally is beyond the possibility of so brief a course, but I do think I do think that think that more integration of what was planned to be presented would be desirable.

The first sentence in the above paragraph is only my personal point of view, from my own background. [] course was a good general presentation, though I, too, would like to have seen more emphasis on the more recent years of Soviet history. The ideas presented by [] were very stimulating and valuable. Many thought that he ought to present more facts -- on the political organization and the practical functioning of the Soviet government. I think his position was that the facts were available in several available reference books. However, (see below, on method) I think some device should have been used to make sure that those who needed these facts got them. [] idea of starting with the U.S. economy and then proceeding to that of the USSR for comparison and contrast was a sound one; however, I believe the general economic principles and examples from US economy could have been presented in less time, and more time spent on the USSR. In general, I agree with several others that, for our purposes at least, too great a portion of the course was given to history and not enough to economics.

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I find myself wondering if the same ends might not have been attained with quite a different type of course, as to method, at least. I would suggest the preparation of a syllabus giving the basic outline of the course in advance, with certain basic information given in tables, charts or brief narrative form. With this there should be a bibliography, with a few basic books required reading ~~from them~~ possibly three or four -- for those who have not read them. The class hours would then be spent partly in lectures, which would supplement these books or present interpretations, and

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partly

in seminars designed to test the knowledge gained by the students and to exchange ideas. [REDACTED]

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This "exchange of ideas" (and of information) is a difficult thing to manage efficiently; several in the present course said they would rather hear the lecturer than listen to each other -- particularly because those most ready to talk are not always those with the most to contribute. However, I do believe there should be some incentive, some requirement, for the student to demonstrate that he is getting something out of the course. There should even be some brief tests--possibly of the objective type--not attempting to cover everything in the course, but just as a check-up and a challenge.

If students are given office [REDACTED] time to attend the course, it seems reasonable to expect them to spend some of their own time in outside reading--a small amount of time, but certainly enough to get the minimum background in connection with the lectures that they should have on their area if they count themselves professional intelligence officers. As an example of what might be accomplished by reading, it seems to me that most [REDACTED] of what was to be gotten from [REDACTED] lectures might have been gotten from reading his book.

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